



COLIN LUTHER POWELL

1 October 1989 — 30 September 1993

Assignments	Dates	
	From	To
Senior Adviser, Amphibious Task Force 211 and Commander, Task Force 210; Senior Adviser, Deputy Commander, Tran Hung Dao, Binh Thuy, from 6 Apr 1971 to 20 Aug 1971, US Naval Forces, Vietnam and Naval Advisory Group, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam .	1970	1971
Director, Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations and Deputy to President's Personal Representative for Micronesian Status Negotiations, Department of Interior, Washington, DC	1971	1973
Deputy Director, Strategic Plans, Policy and Nuclear Systems Division, Office of Chief Naval Operations, Washington, DC	1973	1974
Director, East Asia and Pacific Region, Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA), Washington, DC	1974	1976
Commander, Middle East Force	1976	1977
Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Plans, Policy and Operations and Senior Navy Member, US Delegation, United Nations Military Staff Committee, Washington, DC	1977	1980
Commander in Chief, Allied Forces Southern Europe	1980	1983
Commander in Chief, Pacific Command		

General Colin L. Powell
United States Army



ROTC Cadet Sergeant First Class Powell, 1957.

(redesignated US Pacific Command on	oak leaf clusters)
11 October 1983).	Navy Distinguished Service Medal (with 2
1983.	gold stars)
1985	Army Distinguished Service Medal
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington,	Air Force Distinguished Service Medal
DC	Coast Guard Distinguished Service Medal
1985.	Legion of Merit (with 2 oak leaf clusters)
1989	Bronze Star (with combat "V")
	Air Medal

Principal US Military Decorations

Defense Distinguished Service Medal (with 3



Lieutenant Colonel Powell as a battalion commander in South Korea.

Colin Luther Powell, the son of Jamaican immigrants, was born on 5 April 1937 in the Harlem section of New York City. He grew up in the South Bronx, where he graduated from Morris High School. At sixteen he entered the City College of New York. Attracted by the panache of the Pershing Rifles drill team, he joined the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC). There he found a sense of direction. He became company commander of

the Pershing Rifles, attained ROTC's highest rank of cadet colonel, and was named a "distinguished military graduate." When he graduated in 1958 with a bachelor of science in geology, Powell was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Regular Army.

During the next decade Powell mastered infantry tactics and unit leadership. After completing Infantry Officer Basic, Ranger, and Airborne schools, he joined the 3d Armored Division in West Germany as a



Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney swears in General Powell as the twelfth Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 3 October 1989.

platoon leader. He then transferred to Fort Devens, Massachusetts, to command a company of the 5th Infantry Division and in 1962 was promoted to captain.

From December 1962 to November 1963 Powell was assigned to Vietnam, where he served as an adviser to a South Vietnamese infantry battalion. Wounded during this tour, he received a Purple Heart. On his return, he completed the Infantry

Officer Advanced Course at Fort Benning, Georgia; was promoted to major in 1966; and the following year became an instructor at the Infantry School. In 1968 he graduated from the Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, second in a class of 1,244.



General Powell briefs the press during Operation DESERT STORM, 1991.

In June 1968 Major Powell returned to Vietnam, serving first as a battalion executive officer and then as Assistant Chief of Staff, Operations (G-3), and later deputy G-3 with the 23d Infantry Division (Americal). During this tour he received the Soldier's Medal for repeatedly returning to a burning helicopter to rescue others despite being injured himself.

Powell spent 1969 to 1973 in Washington, DC. Promoted to lieutenant colonel in 1970, he received a master's in business administration from George Washington University

in 1971. In 1971 and 1972 he worked as an operations research analyst in the Planning, Programming and Analysis Directorate in the Office of the Assistant Vice Chief of Staff of the Army. Selected in 1972 as one of seventeen White House Fellows from among 1,500 applicants, he was assigned to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as Special Assistant to the Deputy Director.

Lieutenant Colonel Powell returned to a troop assignment in September 1973 as Commander of the 1st Battalion of the 32d

Infantry, 2d Infantry Division, guarding the Demilitarized Zone in the Republic of Korea. His next assignment, from 1974 to 1975, was as an operations research systems analyst in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. During 1975 and 1976 he was a student at the National War College, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, DC. Promoted to colonel in 1976, Powell assumed command of the 2d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Fort Campbell, Kentucky, in April of that year.

Colonel Powell returned to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) in July 1977 as Executive to the Special Assistant to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense. After promotion to brigadier general in 1979 he continued in OSD as Senior Military Assistant to the Deputy Secretary until June 1981, when he became Assistant Division Commander for Operations of the 4th Infantry Division (Mechanized), Fort Carson, Colorado. In August 1982 General Powell became the Deputy Commanding General of the US Army Combined Arms Combat Development Activity, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

In July 1983 he returned to the Pentagon as Senior Military Assistant to Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger. Promoted to major general the following month, Powell continued as Weinberger's assistant until June 1986, when he assumed command of V Corps in Europe. He was promoted to lieutenant general in July.

Six months later, President Ronald Reagan summoned him to become the Deputy National Security Adviser under Frank Carlucci, for whom Powell had worked at OMB and in OSD. When Carlucci became Secretary of Defense, General Powell replaced him as National Security Adviser. He served in this position from December 1987 until the end of the Reagan presidency in January 1989. During this time he organized and coordinated

several summit meetings between President Reagan and other world leaders.

In April 1989 Powell received his fourth star and became Commander in Chief of Forces Command (CINCFOR), Fort McPherson, Georgia, responsible for the general reserve of US-based Army forces. Within months of his appointment as CINCFOR, President George Bush selected General Powell to be the twelfth Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. When Powell became Chairman on 1 October 1989, he was the first African-American, the first ROTC graduate, and, at 52, the youngest officer to serve in the position.

General Powell's tenure as Chairman coincided with the end of the Cold War; his chairmanship saw more change in the world than that of any of his predecessors. Powell was the principal architect of the reorientation of US strategy and the reduction of the armed forces in response to the changed strategic environment. He directed the most significant change in national military strategy since the late 1940s, devising a strategy which focused on regional and humanitarian crises rather than on the Soviet Union. Powell's concept of a "base force" sufficient to maintain the United States' superpower status won Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney's and President Bush's support for a twenty-five percent reduction in the size of the armed forces.

The first Chairman to serve his whole tenure under the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense reforms, Powell devoted considerable energy to promoting joint culture in order to enhance the services' ability to fight together as a team. He guided the development of doctrine for joint warfare and was the driving force behind the expansion of the Atlantic Command's responsibilities, which transformed it from a principally naval headquarters into one with responsibility for ground and air forces based in the continental United States as well as East Coast

naval forces. When the new US Atlantic Command (USACOM) came into existence on 1 October 1993, the day after Powell's retirement, it was a joint command designed to meet the military requirements of the post-Cold War world.

During Powell's chairmanship, the US Armed Forces made over two dozen operational deployments. An attempted coup against the Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega on 3 October 1989 almost postponed Powell's welcoming ceremony at the Pentagon. Over the next two months, the Chairman worked with the Commander in Chief of US

Southern Command to develop a contingency plan that would provide a large force should President Bush decide to intervene in Panama. After Panama declared a state of war with the United States and Panamanian soldiers killed an American officer and manhandled another officer and his wife, President Bush ordered the deployment of approximately 14,000 troops to Panama in late December. They joined almost 13,000 troops already there to execute Operation JUST CAUSE, which resulted in the defeat of the Panamanian forces and the downfall of Noriega.

General Powell played a central role in the preparation for and conduct of the Persian Gulf War. In response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, President Bush ordered the deployment of some 250,000 US troops to Saudi Arabia in Operation DESERT SHIELD. Powell advised keeping all options open, exerting diplomatic and economic pressure while building up sufficient forces in the region to assure quick victory if the United States and its coalition partners concluded that military action was necessary. When Iraqi President Saddam Hussein did not withdraw his forces from Kuwait, Powell endorsed the President's decision to launch an offensive—Operation DESERT STORM—in January 1991. After it became clear in late February that the coalition forces had achieved an overwhelming victory, he supported the President's decision to suspend hostilities. The Persian Gulf victory boosted the military's standing with the American public, and General Powell became a well-known and popular figure. For his leadership during the war, he received a Congressional Gold Medal, struck in his honor, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

In addition to the combat operations in Panama and the Persian Gulf, US forces participated in a number of rescue and relief operations during Powell's chairmanship,

including humanitarian relief operations to provide assistance to famine victims in Somalia and to victims of ethnic warfare in Bosnia in 1992 and 1993. While supporting limited use of US forces to contain the crisis in the Balkans and to assist the United Nations forces on the ground there, General Powell was reluctant to commit US forces to intervene directly in the war and thus become one of the belligerents. He forcefully argued against the commitment of US ground troops in either a peacemaking or combat role. In internal debates in the Bush and Clinton administrations and in published articles, he advocated the use of US forces in combat only when there were clear political objectives and the political willingness to commit sufficient resources to achieve these objectives. Although there was a perception of an uneasy relationship between the military and the new Clinton administration, especially over the issue of homosexuals in the military, General Powell enjoyed a close working relationship with President William J. Clinton.

When General Powell retired on 30 September 1993, the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff had been substantially enhanced due to his aggressive exercise of the expanded powers granted the Chairman in the Goldwater-Nichols Act. His tenure as Chairman subsequently became the subject of debate among some scholars and commentators concerned with the role of the military in policy development.

At his retirement General Powell was awarded a second Presidential Medal of Freedom, this one with distinction. Later that year, Queen Elizabeth II made him an honorary Knight Commander of the Bath. In retirement, Powell wrote his autobiography and was a frequent public speaker. As a member of the three-man delegation, headed by former President Jimmy Carter, that President Clinton sent to Haiti in September 1994, he played a key role in negotiating the peaceful transfer of power from the military dictatorship to the elected president.

Colin Luther Powell

General, USA

Promotions

Dates

Temporary

Permanent

2LT	09 Jun 58	30 Jun 58
1LT	30 Dec 59	30 Jun 61
CPT.	02 Jun 62	30 Jun 65
MAJ.	24 May 66.	30 Jun 72
LTC	09 Jul 70.	30 Jun 79
COL		01 Feb 76
BG	01 Jun 79	22 Jan 82
MG		01 Aug 83
LTG.		01 Jul 86
GEN		04 Apr 89

Assignments

Dates

From

To

Student, Infantry Officer Basic Course, Ranger and Airborne Courses, US Army Infantry School, Fort Benning, GA	1958	1958
Platoon Leader, Company B, 2d Armored Rifle Battalion, 48th Infantry, US Army, Europe	1958	1959
Assistant Adjutant, Combat Command B, 3d Armored Division, US Army, Europe	1959	1959
Platoon Leader, later Executive Officer, Company D, 2d Armored Rifle Battalion, 48th Infantry, US Army, Europe	1959	1960
Liaison Officer, later Executive Officer, Company A, 1st Battle Group, 4th Infantry, 2d Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized), Fort Devens, MA	1960	1961
Commander, Company A, 1st Battle Group, 4th Infantry, 2d Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized), Fort Devens, MA	1961	1962
S-1, 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized), Fort Devens, MA	1962	1962
Student, US Army Special Warfare Center, Fort Bragg, NC	1962	1962
Self Defense Corps Training Center Adviser, 2d Infantry Division, I Corps, Military		

Assistance Advisory Group, Vietnam 1962 1963